

PARENT EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR NEVER MARRIED PARENTS
"FOR THE CHILDREN"

This Court finds that the interests of the minor children of never-married parents appearing before the Court would be well served by educating the parents about children's emotional needs and the effects of family-related litigation on child behavior and development.

IT IS HEREBY ORDERED THAT:

1. In the Hampshire, Essex and Suffolk Divisions of the Probate and Family Court Department, all parties to Complaint to Establish Paternity, a Complaint for Custody/Support/Visitation, and in any case involving visitation or custody of minor children of never-married parents filed on or after July 1, 2008, may be ordered by a judge of this court to attend and participate in a education program known as "*For the Children*". Nothing herein shall limit the judge or his or her designee from waiving this requirement.

2. Attendance at the program is mandatory unless waived by the Court. Parties must register within sixty (60) days of service of the complaint and attend the next available session. The Court may waive the attendance requirement upon motion, with notice, for one or both parties. Waivers will be granted upon a showing of chronic and severe violence which negates safe parental communication, language barriers, institutionalization or other unavailability of a party, or where justice otherwise indicates.

3. Sanctions may be imposed by the Court for a party's failure to register with "*For the Children*" within sixty days of service of the complaint.

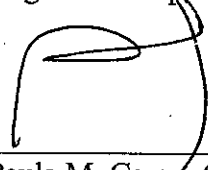
4. A pamphlet describing "*For the Children*" and including a copy of this Order shall be given to the plaintiff or his/her attorney upon the filing of a complaint involving minor children as set forth above. The plaintiff or his/her attorney shall serve a copy of the pamphlet along with the complaint and summons to the person authorized to make service according to Mass.R.Dom. Rel.P.4(c)

5. Nothing herein shall be construed to limit the authority of any Probate and Family Court Justice sitting in the Hampshire, Essex and Suffolk Divisions to order parties to attend a parent education program in any case involving visitation, custody or support of minor children.

6. All information and materials submitted in conjunction with "*For the Children*" shall not be discoverable.

7. The parties to a particular case are prohibited from attending the same program session.

Effective: November 1, 2008



Paula M. Carey, Chief Justice